

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 221625Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4713

AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

INFO AEC GERMANTOWN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 14185

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, GW, IN, OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: KISSINGER VISIT AND - NUCLEAR-RELATED EXPORTS FROM FRG
TO INDIA

REF: A. STATE 222893

1. INDIAN AEC CHAIRMAN H.N. SETHNA ASKED ME YESTERDAY ABOUT THE DECISION BY THE GERMAN BRANCH OF UNION CARBIDE NOT TO SUPPLY DISTILLATION TRAYS TO THE UHDE COMPANY WHICH IS PUTTING TOGETHER A HEAVY WATER PLANT FOR INDIA. HE SAID HE ASSUMED THE US GOVERNMENT WAS BEHIND THIS ACT AND ASKED WHETHER THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT BE FOLLOWING THE CANADIAN POLICY OF ATTEMPTING TO SLOW DOWN INDIAN ATOMIC DEVELOPMENT BY SUCH MICKEY MOUSE MEANS. MY WORDS, "MICKEY MOUSE." SETHNA SCARCELY CONCEALED HIS CONTEMPT FOR THE THOUGHT THAT THE CANADIAN ACTIONS WOULD IN FACT SLOW INDIA DOWN. (SETHNA POINTED OUT TO ME THAT THERE ARE ALREADY SUCH TRAYS IN INDIA. THEY ARE PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF COPYING THEM. NEED I REMIND ANYBODY THAT IT TURNED OUT THAT THE EGYPTIANS WERE CAPABLE OF OPERATING THE SEUZ CANAL.) SETHNA'S
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VIEW WAS THAT THE CANADIAN ACTION WOULD ONLY MEAN THAT INDIA

IN THREE YEARS WOULD BE WHOLLY SELF-SUFFICIENT IN ANY ATOMIC ENTERPRISE IT CHOSE TO UNDERTAKE.

2. TO MY DISTRESS, SETHNA TOLD ME HE HAD INCLUDED THIS INFORMATION IN HIS MONTHLY REPORT TO THE PRIME MINISTER, WHO IS ALSO THE MINISTER FOR ATOMIC ENERGY. INASMUCH AS THE PRIME MINISTER IS NEAR TO MAKING A SPECTACLE OF HERSELF SEARCHING FOR EVIDENCE OF WHAT SHE KNOWS TO BE TRUE, TO WIT THAT THE UNITED STATES IS ORGANIZING OTHER COUNTRIES TO RETARD INDIA'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT. I EXPECT THE ATMOSPHERE WILL BE FRIGID OR WORSE WITH RESPECT TO THIS ISSUE WHEN THE SECRETARY ARRIVES. I WAS WITH SETHNA FOR EIGHT HOURS YESTERDAY AND SPENT MOST OF IT ASKING HOW WE COULD GET A CONSTRUCTIVE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY ON THE LARGER ASPECTS OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, DISARMAMENT, AND THE LIKE. FOR A NORMALLY FRIENDLY AND DIRECT PERSON, HE WAS EVASIVE AND AT TIMES ALMOST FRETFUL. AT TIMES HE SEEMED TO BE PLEADING THAT WE NOT EVEN RAISE THE SUBJECT. HE WAS TO SEE THE PRIME MINISTER THIS MORNING AND UNDERTOOK TO MENTION THE POSSIBILITY TO HER. I HAD STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF HER REALIZING THAT THE SECRETARY HAD NO ACCUSATORY OR PUNITIVE INTENTIONS OF ANY KIND. HE CALLED ME THIS AFTERNOON TO SAY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD TOLD HIM SHE DID NOT WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT WITH HIM BUT WOULD THINK ABOUT WHAT HE HAD SAID. I CAN ONLY INTERPRET THIS TO MEAN THAT SHE IS MORE SENSITIVE ABOUT THIS MATTER NOW THAN EVER. WE HAVE TO CONSIDER THE PROBABILITY THAT IT IS THE UNION CARBIDE EVENT THAT CAUSED THIS.

3. THIS WOULD NOT BE THE ONLY SUCH EVENT. SETHNA VOLUNTEERED TO ME YESTERDAY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD BEEN FURIOUS ABOUT OUR LETTER CONCERNING THE DISPOSITION OF TARAPUR PLUTONIUM.

4. AND SO THE QUESTION ARISES: WHAT, IF ANYTHING, HAVE WE TOLD UNION CARBIDE? HOW CAN WE UNDO THE DAMAGE? THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT COULD DEPEND ON ATTENTION TO THIS QUESTION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REEXPORTS, NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, EXPORT CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NEWDE14185
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740301-1035
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741027/aaaaawtm.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: A. STATE 222893
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 MAR 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <23 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KISSINGER VISIT AND - NUCLEAR-RELATED EXPORTS FROM FRG TO INDIA
TAGS: TECH, OVIP, GE, IN, UNION CARBIDE CORP, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005